

# Minutes of the AGM of the Christian Malford Allotments Association

Held at The Rising Sun Pub, Monday March 5<sup>th</sup> 2018 (19:30 – 21:00)

**Present:** Mike Wilkins (Chair), Mike Harlowe (Treasurer), Steve Hudson (Secretary), Terry Johnson, Pam Carter, Rob Patchett, Liz Wilkins, Clara Hudson, Stephanie & Danny Rowles, Neil Chambers, Kevin Watson, Mary Davies, Ben Smith

**Apologies:** Kathryn Nicholas, Lynne Patchett, Morag Johnson, Roger Carter, Adrian Barrance, Jacqueline Chenier

**Not Present:** Justin King, Dereck Townsend, Leslie & Gill Sells

## 1. Review of Minutes of Last AGM

The meeting voted to accept the minutes of the previous AGM, which had been published on the Allotment website and were distributed by email prior to the meeting. There were no matter arising.

## 2. Officers Reports

The **Chair** welcomed the allotmenters to the 7<sup>th</sup> AGM. He noted that the weather during the previous season had generally been fine, and that the allotments had not been plagued with blight. However, the location of the site had meant that there was continued damage from “local wildlife”, with some plots being affected more than others.

Apart from the water supply issue, the only other noteworthy item was tree branches falling onto the fence at Kevin & Mary’s end of the site in high winds. These were cleared by allotmenters (Kevin, Mary, MikeW) and disposed of on the village bonfire.

The chair thanked the committee for their support, and all those who helped out when asked – particularly Ben, Danny and Kevin, Clara for organising the produce competition, and Steve for organising the manure supplies.

This season, the committee would like support from allotmenters for the following maintenance work: respraying the shed; clearing weeds from around the bore-hole and laying weed suppressant fabric; keeping the area around boundary hedge free from competing weeds (as per Neil’s splendid attempt last season). Allotmenters were all encouraged to improve house-keeping within the shed – particularly removing mud and cleaning tools.

The **Secretary** reported that there had been no correspondence with external bodies.

The **Treasurer** reported that the association funds are in good order, and provided the meeting with the following summary:

Opening balance (1 <sup>st</sup> April 2017)		£ 397.45
Maintenance Fees and Rent	£ 750.00	£ 1147.45
Monies from Village Fete	£ 200.00	£ 1347.45
Water Pump and Shed Maintenance	- £ 207.10	£ 1140.35
Rent to CM Parish Council	- £ 375.00	£ 765.35
Closing Balance (1 <sup>st</sup> March 2018)		£ 765.35

He noted that rent will stay the same as this is specified by CM parish council, but that the committee recommendation, given available funds and projected income/expense, is to reduce subscriptions from £25 to £15, subject to discussion later in meeting.

## 3. Election / Re-Election of Officers

All members of the committee indicated their willingness to stand for re-election. The chair noted that there had been no expressions of interest received from allotmenters to stand for election, and the secretary polled the meeting to see if there was any interest from members present at the meeting.

Mike Wilkins was proposed for the position of Chair by Kevin and seconded by Rob and was duly re-elected. Steve Hudson was proposed for the position of Secretary by Kevin and seconded by Terry and was duly re-elected. Mike Harlowe was proposed for the position of Treasurer by Mary and seconded by Liz and was duly re-elected.

#### **4. Water Supply**

The chair reported that the current water supply solution had done well at a reasonable cost, but that there had been multiple fractures in pipework, failure of plastic components damaged by weathering, replacement parts to pump and that currently there has been extensive use of masking tape for repairs. The water supply will incur further costs this year (though pump, the major cost item should be OK for a little while longer, so long as there is no fracture to the metal work) so there is a need to consider other options for the future.

A grant has been applied for to install a submersible solar powered pump (Bradenstoke Community Benefit Fund). There are no costed details yet as the committee have only just started looking at this possibility. The chair has submitted an expression of interest form with estimated costs and received favourable feedback so far, but the process is at an early stage and a detailed costed proposal would need to be submitted before it could be considered formally. Any grant monies received would only be for equipment, and the allotmenters would need to carry out the labour. There was discussion by those present at the meeting, with some specific questions from the floor:

Q (Mary) when would the grant committee meet?

R (Mike) they have not said; we are at an early stage, and we are unaware of details of process yet

Q (Mary) what is the most expensive (non grant funded) alternative that we would need to fund?

R (Mike) we would like a robust solution that would last at least 7 years; would need to replace current piping as a minimum (we would need to install/bury) – 50 metres (estimate £250) and replace plastic valves with brass/steel ones (estimate 2 x £80each)

Q (Rob) would replacement pipe be same as current?

R (Mike) no we would look at higher spec (eg water board style) that we would consider burying

Q (Rob) regarding the solar solution – if there is no battery, what would be the case if lots of people want water in the evening?

R (Mike) these are things that need to be worked through, and we would be looking for a small steering group that would review our needs versus an initial proposal that we currently have from a German company that is already used in other allotments

There was general interest and approval from attendees for the continued exploration of such a solution.

#### **5 Expenditure going forward**

##### **a. Petrol Mower**

The chair noted that we have had good use this year of mower that Ben kindly donated. However, it leaks fuel, and requires some further maintenance/repair work. Furthermore, some allotmenters have indicated that the current mower is too big/heavy and they are unwilling/unable to use it.

There was some discussion of pros and cons of purchasing a cheap petrol mower, repairing the current, or running two mowers side-by-side. Mike not sure how long current mower will last as parts are not easily sourced. Rob proposed that the committee should be empowered to purchase a new (replacement) mower up to the value of £150. This was accepted by the meeting.

##### **b. Water Supply**

As per agenda item 4, it was noted that ongoing maintenance and repair work will be required this season, with an estimated cost of £410.

### **c. Manure**

Everyone who had manure last season was happy with the quality and mechanism/timing of delivery, and asked for a repeat this year. As per last season, each allotmenteer would specify how much they require and would purchase it themselves. Steve agreed to organise this again.

### **6 Produce Competition**

There is a different format for fete this year (July 15<sup>th</sup>), and the organising committee will approach village organisations to see if they will take part. Clara is unable to organise the event this year. The chair asked the meeting whether we should we run a produce competition and, if so, is anyone willing to take the lead? Clara summarised what is required to organise the event. There was a consensus that we should run an event and Kevin agreed to take on the role of lead organiser with help from Mary and Danny.

### **7 Social**

The meeting agreed an informal get-together (BYOB&F) at the allotment 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in August (11<sup>th</sup>)

### **8 Association Subscriptions for 2018-19**

Committee recommended lowering subs from £25 to £15 given current financial status and proposed expenditure of approx. £650 (mower and piping). Kevin reminded the meeting that the original plan was to build up a pot of funds in anticipation of future high cost repairs (eg fence, shed) that would not be funded by the council. There was a proposal from Rob to keep funds at £25, seconded by Mary, and this was carried by vote.

Terry mentioned the possibility of the allotment working as a group to assist at the village bonfire, which may elicit more funds. Chair asked him to explore the possibility and come back to the committee with a proposal.

### **9 Date of Next Meeting – Monday March 4<sup>th</sup> 2019**

**(Signed)**

**M Wilkins (Chair)**